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PROGRAM The World Tonight

STATION WTOP Radio
CBS Network

DATE April 21, 1983 6:00 P.M.

CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Embassy Blast/CIA Station Wiped Out

BILL MCLAUGHLIN: I'm Bill McLaughlin at the State Department.

The bomb blast at the Beirut Embassy dealt the CIA its worst single blow in many years, according to informed sources here. Early this week, the State Department announced that one of those killed was the CIA's top Mideast expert, Robert Clayton Ames. He was just visiting Beirut during a Mideast swing. What the State Department did not announce was that the bomb virtually wiped out the CIA's station in Beirut. Along with Ames, five resident CIA specialists died in the bomb attack. In fact, the car carrying the bomb was parked right under the wing housing the CIA's section at the embassy.

Besides the obvious human factor, the loss in experience and knowledge about the Middle East is said to be staggering. As one source put it, "Perhaps a CIA secretary escaped. That's about all."

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